

THE EXAMINER

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

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PAUL SEYMOUR,

PUBLISHER.

For the Examiner,

Slavery stated in itself, and Non-Fellowship of those holding slaves, the duty of the Christian Church.—No. 1.

To some of our readers the first proposition may seem self-evident, and a set argument not necessary; for by liberty is right, slavery is wrong. But when we remember that throughout the South, the people do not seem to realize its truth, and when we remember that very many of the clergy maintain that it is right and sanctioned by the Bible, and that ninety-nine hundredths of the Christian ministry in our land, claim that it is at least tolerated by the Bible, and that on the floor of that convention which met in our own State last spring to devise plans for the abolition of slavery, it was there claimed by many of the most influential minds, that slavery is not sinful in itself—the reader will see that argument is necessary. If these ministers and other leading minds, do not know better, they need to be convinced. If they do know better, acting as they do, they should be paid to the wall; and brief arguments should be put into the hands of the people, by which they could do it.

Again, in all moral reforms, it is essentially necessary that we get hold of that greatest of all levers—conscience. This elicited, the cause will move on surmounting all difficulties. If then we can show that slavery is sinful, and endangering the soul's interests of those practicing it, and those working at it, we may expect that the people will act speedily and efficiently: for "all that a man hath will he give for his life."

And it is a fact largely confirming the foregoing, that the large mass of the men in our State, now struggling for the freedom of the slave, are almost all moral and religious men. Conscience is at the bottom of the move, and conscience we need more fully to enlist.

Also, as the Christian Church in our land has a controlling influence in modeling the public sentiment and laws of the land, either for good or evil, it is all important that her action should be right on this subject. And as she is designed to be the salt of the land, to purify it from its vices, it is high time that she was up and doing.

SLAVERY SINFUL.

Slavery is not mere bond-service; as that of an apprentice or bound child to a guardian, until of adult age. Nor is it, as Paley defines, mere obligation to do service for another; as of a child to a parent up to adult age—as of one who contracts to serve for a certain sum up to a given time—as of a citizen who by constitutional compact, may be required to serve as a soldier or juror: each of these is obligation to do service, but not slavery. Slavery is that relation in which one human being is, without his or her consent, made the property of another or other human beings, before and after adult age.

That this relation is sinful, is manifest from the following considerations.

1. Those facts and arguments proving that the reader, or any one human being, has a right to liberty, prove that all other persons, not criminals, have a right to liberty.

The fact that one man, or race of men, may have more intellectual capacity than another man, or race of men, gives no just ground for enslaving the inferior: otherwise the most intellectual man that exists, may have a right to enslave every other man, white and black.

Nor does the fact that one man has a darker skin, thicker lip, flatter nose, or more knobby hair than another give a sufficient and just cause why he should be enslaved—otherwise he who has a fairer skin, thinner lip, sharper nose, or straighter hair than you, or I, may have a right to enslave you, and the fairest man in the world may enslave every other.

Again, by common consent as right, there are colored men—negroes, who, in the South as well as the North, are free men, having by protection of law, personal ownership, proceeds of their labor, and other natural rights.

Then by common consent a black skin, with all the features of the negro do not of themselves constitute a reason why a man should be enslaved.

Again, the large portion of the human family are colored. Is the large majority to be enslaved by the minority, because climate and other local causes have given them a darker complexion than that of the few pale faces? What presumption! And yet we often hear it, and that, too, in high places.

2. In a state of nature, before governments are formed, man, universal man owns himself—has a right to liberty. Now, whatever violates nature's order must be sinful.

Nor does man lose his right to liberty by becoming a member of an organized society. He has no right to barter it away, and society has no divine right to take it from him—panderers to despotism, in our own State, from a foreign land, to the contrary notwithstanding.

The province of human government is to protect—not to destroy man's natural rights—to more perfectly secure them to him, as may be shown from the best of authorities (which authorities show also that slavery is sinful).

The framers of our Declaration of Independence said—"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and have certain inalienable rights; among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. For the protection of which—no destruction—"governments are formed, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." Thus recognising the fact that man in a state of nature owns himself, and in entering society he loses not these natural rights, but has a right to their exercise, on his own part, and protection of them from others.

Blackstone, the most distinguished writer of English law, and whose works are textbooks in American jurisprudence, this writer says, "Those rights which God and nature have bestowed on the human race, are therefore

called natural rights, such as life and liberty, need not the aid of human laws to be more effectually invested in every man than they are; and no human legislature has power to abridge or destroy them."

Again, speaking of these natural and absolute rights, he says: "The primary object of law is to maintain and regulate these absolute rights. When, therefore, human laws or governments, attempt to take away the natural rights of an individual person, they violate the very end for which they were formed; they attempt that which they have no right to do. Blackstone speaking of those things intrinsically wrong, says: "The declaratory part of municipal law has no force or operation at all." It is of no authority when it violates natural right. For as he says: "Upon the law of nature and revelation all human laws depend. And no human law should be suffered to contradict them; and should any human law allow or enjoin us to commit a violation of the laws of nature or of revelation, we are bound to violate human law, or else violate both the natural and revealed law." Every innocent man has a right to liberty now, and no human law may deprive him of it.

If Indians, or Africans, or any other body of men, white or black, should pass laws that the reader, with his family, should be held as slaves; and should actually by force of numbers subjugate him, and hold his posterity after him as slaves, would he feel for a moment that they had a right to do it? No! Every man is bound to know that slavery is sinful.

Jefferson, speaking of slavery says:—"Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed the only firm basis—a conviction in the minds of the people that they are not to be violated but with their wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever; that, considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation is almost possible events; that it may become possible even by supernatural interference. The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in a contest."—Notes on Virginia.

WASHINGTON.—"Your purchase of an estate in the colony of Cayenne, with a view of emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit might diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country."—Letter to Lafayette, 10th May 1786.

And Washington emancipated all of his own slaves.

MONROE.—"We have found that this evil (slavery) has preyed upon the very vitals of the community, and has been prejudicial to all the States in which it has existed."—Speech in Virginia Convention.

WILLIAM PENNEY.—"It is really matter of astonishment to me, that the people of Maryland do not blush at the very name of freedom. Not content with exposing to the world, for near a century, a speaking picture of abominable oppression, they are still ingenious to prevent the hand of generosity from robbing it of half its horrors."—Speech on Slavery in Maryland House of Delegates, 1789.

PATRICK HERVEY.—"It is a debt we owe the purity of our religion, to show that it is at variance with that law which warrants slavery."—Letter to A. Bennett.

MANUMISSION SOCIETY OF SOUTH CAROLINA.—"In the eastern parts of the State, the slaves considerably outnumber the free population. Their situation there is wretched beyond description. Impoverished by the mismanagement which we have already attempted to describe, the master, unable to supply his own grandeur and maintain his slaves, puts the unfortunate wretches upon short allowance, scarcely sufficient for their sustenance, so that a great part go half naked and half starved much of their time."

Generally, throughout the State, the African is abused, a monstrous outrage creature."—Report, 1829.

JOHN RANDOLPH.—"Sir, I envy neither the head nor the heart of that man, from the North, who rises here to defend slavery from principle."—Speech in Congress, 1829.

THOMAS J. RANDOLPH.—"It is a practice, and an increasing practice, in parts of Virginia, to rear slaves for market. How can an honorable mind, a patriot and a lover of his country, bear to see this Ancient Dominion converted into one vast menagerie, where men are reared for market like oxen for the shambles."—Speech in Virginia Legislature, 1832.

HENRY CLAY.—"I consider slavery a curse—a curse to the master—a wrong, a grievous wrong to the slave. In the abject state it is all wrong, and no possible contingency can make it right."—Found in a Speech delivered in 1839. His late letter to Mr. Pindell endorses the same statement.

REV. R. J. BRICKENRIDGE, of Lexington, one of the most respectable citizens of our State, a man of the first talents, and a prominent minister in the Presbyterian Church says:—"What is slavery as it exists among us? We reply, it is that condition enforced by the laws of one-half of the States of this confederacy, in which one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another portion called slaves, as—

1. "To deprive them of the entire earnings of their own labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor itself, by continuing healthy existence—thus committing clear robbery.

2. "To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage, by denying to them the civil rights of marriage—thus breaking up the dearest relations of life, and encouraging universal prostitution.

3. "To deprive them of the means and opportunities of moral and intellectual culture; in many States making it a high penal offense to teach them to read—thus perpetuating whatever evil there is that proceeds from ignorance.

4. "To set up between parents and their children an authority higher than the impulse of nature and the laws of God, which breaks up the authority of the father over his own offspring, and at pleasure separates the mother at a returnless distance

from her child—thus abrogating the clear laws of nature, thus outraging all decency and justice, and degrading and oppressing thousands upon thousands of beings created like themselves in the image of the Most High God. This is slavery, as it is daily exhibited in every slave State."—African Repository, 1834.

Again he says:—"Out upon such folly! The man who cannot see that involuntary domestic slavery, as it exists among us, is founded upon the principle of taking by force that which is another's, has simply no moral sense."

Again, in a meeting of the citizens of Fayette county, in the Court-house, at Lexington, in the month of May, 1839, called to consider the question of the perpetuation of slavery in this Commonwealth, and addressed by Henry Clay and J. R. Brackenridge, on motion of the latter, the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That hereditary, domestic slavery as it exists among us

1. "Is hostile to the prosperity of the Commonwealth.

2. "It is inconsistent with a state of sound morality.

3. "It is opposed to the fundamental principles of a free government.

4. "It is CONTRARY TO THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND."

A short time previous, on the floor of the Convention which met in Frankfort to devise plans for the abolition of slavery, speaking of human rights he said:—"The dearest of all rights to man is a right to himself; and [slavery] is the most atrocious of all evils."

This, the writer heard and noted at the time. And those who read his able address as reported, saw similar sentiments.

The Synod of Kentucky, in that able address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky, delivered in 1835, said:

"If slavery be sinful, our duty is to rid ourselves of all participation in the sin which it involves, whether the colonizing scheme shall prosper or fail. And that it is sinful is as certain as that the light of God's truth has shone upon our world."

Can human testimony make the case stronger? And it should be remembered that these are Southern men testifying—men who cannot be charged with not knowing what slavery is.

We might add a list of statesmen and divines from other lands, still more numerous, but a few will suffice.

Adam Clark, in his comments, says:—"In heathen countries slavery was in some sort excusable; but among Christians it is an enormity and a crime, for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment."

John Wesley, speaking of the natural rights of the slave says:—"Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the air; and no human creature can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature."

And in view of the fact that slavery deprives man of all his natural rights, he styles it "the sum of all villainies."

3. As the Bible is the highest authority, the standard of right and wrong, and the final appeal, we prove that slavery is sinful by its teaching.

As Milton has suggested in the primitive grant given to man, God gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field; but over man he gave no dominion—"man over man he made not Lord."

God's deliverance of the children of Israel out of the hands of the oppressor, in a manner so miraculous and terrific, is a declaration of his abhorrence of the principle of oppression, too clear ever to be misunderstood. Hence, immediately we find the inspired lawgiver warning the people "not to oppress the stranger"—those dwelling in the land they were about to take possession of, as well as all other people not Jews. "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. If thou afflict them, I will surely hear their cry, and I will surely visit them, and they shall be cut off from thee, and they shall be cut off from thee, and they shall be cut off from thee."—Exod. 22: 21-23.

All men know that to enslave is to oppress. Afterward when He gave more specific laws—a code for the whole human family, the ten commandments, in the last one He guarded all of man's rights, by forbidding man to covet anything which is his neighbor's. Upon this we remark—

1. The word neighbor as here used, means any one and every one of the human family. This is the primary import of the original Hebrew word translated neighbor. Further, we know the moral law was not given to protect the rights, or to regulate the conduct of any one class of men towards another, but to protect the rights and regulate the conduct of ALL men. In the abject state it is all wrong, and no possible contingency can make it right."—Found in a Speech delivered in 1839. His late letter to Mr. Pindell endorses the same statement.

2. The moral law, like every other law, comes not to invest rights but to protect rights already existing. It presupposes that man as man has certain rights to be guarded, not given by the decalogue.

3. Among these rights is that of personal ownership, or liberty. For it must be remembered that the children of Israel were then at the foot of Mt. Sinai, having no statute law; yet when God gave that code, which, as Blackstone says, is the base of all codes, he recognized them, that man had rights already vested—a right to himself before the law was given; and for the protection of which rights, the law was instituted. The moral law then presupposes that man as man, has a right to personal security—to the proceeds of his labor—his property, and to personal ownership; for in this, all other rights inhere. In guarding the former, it necessarily presupposes his right to the latter. To take away personal ownership of an innocent man, or even to covet it, is a plain violation of the moral law is sin." Therefore, slavery is sinful, for it violates the moral law.

The error of Dr. Jurkine, President Shannon, and many others is in overlooking the truth that the moral law presupposes and recognises the right of every man to own himself; and was given to guard his rights, in common with others, from encroachment by his neighbor. And then assuming as they do, that man has a right to rob his fellow-man of his liberty, and that

the word servant as used in the ten commandments means slave, they come to the conclusion that the tenth commandment recognises the right of the master to hold another human being as a slave—as property. What chains between premises and conclusions! Theirs must be really a jumping logic to leap such.

The word servant as here used, could not have been used to denote slave—a person held to involuntary servitude. The Israelites were just emerging from the land of bondage—themselves in poverty—in an unorganised state—no law, nor systematised government to aid the covetors in extorting involuntary service from their fellow beings, and wandering for forty years amidst hostile tribes—how was it possible for them to hold slaves—more involuntary servitude. Sage "philosophers" indeed. The servants contemplated were only such as exist in our free States.

Again, even if some covetous man was then robbing his fellow of personal ownership, and the text forbade his neighbor to covet that slave, still this is no recognition of a master's right to hold another man as a slave. For if any neighbor has a stolen piece of cloth, it is wrong, a violation of the command, for me to covet it, though he has no right to it. To covet, would be an injury to my own heart, and it is right that I should be forbidden to exercise such desires through the robber title he had.

The moral law, then as we have seen, condemns slavery.

But in the Old Testament we have not only general precepts condemnatory of slavery, but also many specific precepts.

In the chapter following that in which the decalogue is found, (Exod. 21: 16,) we find a statute, or precept, most sacredly guarding the liberty of man as man. "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hands, he shall surely be put to death." Does any one say this passage means that one man shall not steal the servant or slave of another man? We answer—

1. Then the text would have been written, "he that stealeth the servant or slave of another man shall be put to death." It is not so written, but forbids stealing any man.

2. The Hebrew word which is here translated stealeth, is such as is used to designate the robbery of liberty—kidnapping. Thus Joseph using the same word says, "I indeed was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews." Gen. 40: 15.

3. Had the text been simply designed to guard the property tenure of the master, then the statute would have required a property punishment, as an atonement. It was a principle, in the Jewish law, that when property was taken, the thief should return an increased amount of property; and if he had not property, then he was to be sold until his services would pay the amount.—No such penalty is here affixed. But as the crime was that of robbing a man of his liberty, and as liberty was, and is, a right dear as life, the same penalty was affixed as that for taking life.

Do you say, though the Jew might not seize a free man and rob him of his liberty, yet he might buy from others, those who had been robbed of their liberty? We answer—"The statute is really forbidding slave holding, as it did slave making. Not only he that stealeth a man, but if the stolen man be found in his hands, he shall surely be put to death." And every body can see that there was consistency in this.—Suppose Moses had passed a law forbidding horse stealing, and then another allowing the Jew to buy those that they knew were stolen, would it not have been a glaring inconsistency, bringing a reproach upon the law and its author, in the eye of the whole world. Reader, in your haste to defend despotism, do not charge God with folly.

Again, that all service in the nation might be strictly voluntary, and that all servants might be freed from every form of oppression, God caused another statute to be written: "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee: He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where he liketh him best: thou shalt not put him to death." Deut. 23: 15, 16. This prevented all forms of oppression—nothing could be endured only that which was voluntary.

Again, that assurance might be doubly sure, God established not only precepts, but national customs, securing liberty to all men.—"Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family."—Lev. 25: 10. By this statute and national custom all the tendencies to oppression, and possibilities of slavery were broken up. If a Jew or a Gentile were even disposed, they could not sell their service for a longer period than to the jubilee. Never was a nation of people more sedulously guarded against the sin of slavery. And this is just what from the history of the nation, we would expect. God had just delivered them from the galling yoke of oppression, and awfully punished the Egyptians for the sin; and God who loved his people, guarded them from a like sin and calamity.

Nations, however, like individuals, sometimes forget the pit from whence they have been digged—break their wholesome laws, and commit outrages on others. So did the Jews in after years. And then we hear God crying by the mouth of his Prophet: "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong—that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work."—Jer. 22: 13. Slavery takes from man his work without giving him an equivalent. God forbids this element of slavery actually brought into involuntary bondage their fellow-beings. God declares such conduct to be contrary to his commands, and punishes the Jews for the sin, by sending them away into bondage to the Babylonians, that they might learn the sinfulness of slavery. Thus saith the Lord: "Ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbor; behold, I proclaim a liberty for you saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed

into all the kingdoms of the earth."—Jer. 34: 17. At another time we find the Jews lamenting the absence of God's blessing; and like many of this land, fasting and praying; yet, "awaiting with the fast of wickedness"—persisting in the enslavement of their fellow-men. God withhold his blessing from them, and tells them that justice and mercy are far more estimable in his sight than these hypocritical shows, or religious ceremonies, without a right state of heart. Read Isa. 58: 1 to 6. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" Nothing could more clearly show God's abhorrence of the sin of slavery, and his approval of freedom.

Do you say these last cases cited, had answer to the enslavement of Jews? We answer—

1. Doubtless God would have been as much displeased had the Jews enslaved any other people than their brethren, for the rights of one man are as sacred in his sight as the rights of any other man.

2. The Gospel tells us the partition wall is broken down—that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—that God is no respecter of persons—that he too, is unchangeable, and therefore, if it was wrong for Jew to oppress Jew, it is now equally wrong for any human being to oppress any other human being.

Do you now say there are other passages which seem to sanction the principle of slavery? We remark—

1. Ninety-nine hundredths of Bible-readers will admit that the foregoing passages show the general principles of the Bible—Justice and Mercy; and are in accordance with the general tenor of its teaching in historical incidents.

2. A correct rule of interpretation, as is universally admitted, requires that no authority be made to contradict itself, and no isolated passages be so construed as to contradict clear and well defined principles laid down by that author.

3. That when words or isolated passages are susceptible of two constructions, we must choose that construction which harmonizes best with principles previously laid down.

Now, the passages you will cite are susceptible of two constructions—one which you will put on, and one which we shall. And that construction which harmonizes best with the principles which we have seen are laid down in the Bible—that construction must be the correct one.

Do you begin by saying the Bible declares Canaan was to be a servant of servants unto his brethren? We answer—

1. As Ham was the offending parent and not Canaan, Ham's act having analogy to characteristic acts of the Canaanites in after days, became the suggesting occasion (as the act of Hezekiah, Isa. 39: 6,) of a prophecy that the Canaanites would be conquered and subjugated for their own sins. See Deut. 18: 12.

2. The fulfillment of a prophecy is no justification of those who fulfil it, else Judas who betrayed Christ, and the Jews who crucified him, were innocent; for these events were foretold.

3. The prophecy has had its fulfillment by other nations long since.

4. The people whom we are enslaving are not Canaanites. The Canaanites were Asiatics, a little tawny, with straight hair, different features and different language from that of the people of Western Africa from whence our slaves were obtained.

The Canaanites were the enterprising men, the shipbuilders, the traders and merchants of their age, as the Sidonians and Tyrians. They settled the land of Canaan and islands of the Mediterranean. A colony went to Carthage. These, as historians tell us, hid their hair.

Phut settled in Africa, and his posterity and some of the posterity of Cush, as Rollin tells us, migrated westward, and they doubtless were the progenitors of our slaves, but, on whom, no prophetic malediction rested.

Do you again bring up Gen. 17: 12, and say Abraham bought children with his money and that he held these as slaves—as property in involuntary servitude, for this only is slavery. We answer, 1. If such were actually bought, we know from the same passage and others that these children were to be circumcised, and that no male person, young or old, could be a member of the families of the Patriarchs, or of the Jewish Commonwealth, nor partake of their feasts, unless he had been circumcised. (See Exod. 12: 44. Gen. 17: 12-14.)

In so doing they became Jews; Esther 8: 17, and entitled to all the privileges of Jews. (See Calmet Art. Proselyte and John 11: 1.) These engaged themselves to receive circumcision and to observe the whole law of Moses. "Thus they were admitted to all the privileges of the Lord." Watson. Foreign servants as well as Hebrew servants were to be initiated into the Hebrew religion; and, when willing, they were to be received into the Hebrew community; and thus received, they were entitled to all the privileges and immunities of native Hebrews.—C. E. Stowe, D.D.—Thus it is clear that these children went out free at the time the children of Hebrew parents did and were entitled to the same immunities and privileges.

2. It is clear that the Patriarchs living, not in confederacies with the strong arm of municipal law to aid them, but wandering as individuals from country to country, with their hundreds of armed servants, as they could not have held these servants as slaves—persons held as property in involuntary servitude. From the very circumstances of the case, the servants must have been voluntary in their service.

President Shannon supposes Abraham had from 1,500 to 2,000 slaves in his possession—that is one man held 2,000 human beings, and 318 of them armed, in involuntary bondage. The boys in the streets would laugh at such absurd conclusions.—These children bought were not held as slaves.

The mere fact that they were bought does not prove that they were held as slaves, as property. Boaz bought Ruth—Hosea his wife, and Jacob his, but they did not hold them as slaves—as property in involuntary servitude. They were restored to freedom immediately.

Do you present another passage—Lev. 25: 44-46—and claim from this, that the Jews bought adult slaves from a third person, and held them as property; and transferred them and their issue to the children of these Jews? We reply, 1. If these servants had children, it is clear from Gen. 17: 12-13, and Exod. 12: 44, that these children, and their parents had to be circumcised; and as such were made Jews, "entitled to all the privileges and immunities of the Jews"—went out free at the Jubilee as the Jew did; (see Lev. 25: 10.) So there was no hereditary servitude as ours—only a bond service for a limited time, and that, as we have seen, voluntary.

2. The Hebrew word Ebed, a form of which, in Lev. 25: 44, is rendered "bondmen," does not of itself necessarily designate a slave; but denotes as our word servant, a person who does service for another, without regard to the time for which, or the principles upon which he does service.—Hence it may designate—

1. One who does voluntary service. (See 1. Kings, 12: 7.

2. It may designate those who pay a tax or tributary service to another nation; as that of the Gibeonites to the Jews, in doing service for the house of God; (see Josh. 9: 23,) yet having their own houses, property and families, and living in their own cities. (See Josh. 10: 1; Ezra 2: 70; 2d Sam. 21: 1-14; Nehem. 7: 73.

3. It may designate a slave as in Gen. 39: 17.

4. It may designate one who binds himself to do service for another; as Exod. 21: 5, 6; or as the Jew who sold himself, that is bound himself to perform service to the year of Jubilee. (See Lev. 25: 47.)

And in the text under consideration the word designates the relation, and is translated bondmen because the time of service was fixed by law. In becoming servants, they bound themselves by law to serve until the Jubilee. We said the servant bound himself, for from Lev. 25: 45, we learn that the Jews were to buy, that is, procure service (for this is the primary import of the word rendered buy) from the strangers dwelling in their land, as well as those round about them. And the words "children of the stranger" in verse 25, means adult Gentiles; just as the words "children of Israel," in verse 26, means adult Israelites. Moreover, these persons called children of the stranger, had "begot children in the land." (See verse 26.) Of these the Jews were to buy, or procure service.

Now who sold these strangers? The Jew dare not seize them, and do so. Such an act was punished with death; (see Exod. 21: 16.) Then it is clear that they bound themselves, or sold their service until the Jubilee. Do you say these servants were to be a possession and an inheritance and therefore must have been held as slaves, as property? We reply—the words "possession" and "inheritance" are often used in a different limited sense—not designating property tenure. God says concerning Israel, "I am their inheritance, and ye shall give them no inheritance in Israel; I am their possession." (Ezek. 44: 28.)

Did Israel own or hold God as a slave—as property, because he is called their "inheritance" and "possession"? Certainly not. So previous statutes, as we have seen, forbid the idea that the Jews should have an absolute property tenure in these Gentiles, or strangers.

Again, Isaiah describing the return of the Jews from captivity in Babylon, says: "The strangers (Babylonians) will be joined with them, and they shall share to the house of Jacob, and Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids." (see Isa. 14: 1-2.) The truth taught is that many of the Babylonians would embrace the Jewish religion. To do so, they would have to become circumcised, and members of the family—"would be added to become proselytes; to be willing to accompany them to their own homes, and to become their servants there."—Barnes. Here possession denotes the service which the Babylonians voluntarily rendered to the Jews—"they CLAVE to the house of Jacob."

Also the word "forever," in the text under consideration, is not to be used as it generally is, denoting perpetual property in these servants and their issue. For the master did not live perpetually—the servant did not live perpetually—and as we have seen, there was no such thing as hereditary slavery—i. e. children of servants were not held as slaves, but circumcised and made Jews "entitled to all the privileges of Jews." Also, the Jubilee terminated all bond service. Josephus says even the ear-bored servant, and his wife and children went out free then.

The passage correctly rendered is as follows: "Always ye shall serve yourselves with them;" that is, ye shall invariably always procure your servants from among the strangers among you and around you. Barnes gives a similar exposition of the text and you will see the same in the margin of the Bible, published by the Bible Society.

Thus expounded, the text presents not the Jewish code as simply a refinement of previous barbarisms, self selfish and unjust, but steps at once upon the broad ground of justice and mutual benevolence, and harmonizes with principles and statutes previously referred to.

But did we even grant that the Patriarchs, and the Israelites under the Mosaic economy held slaves, that would be no permit to us for the Patriarchs had concubines: we may not therefore have.

Under the Mosaic economy, God commanded the Israelites to slay the Amalekites. God as sovereign had a right to punish the Amalekites for their sins, with the sword, if he chose. But may we, therefore, without any such command, go and make war upon an innocent people?

Likewise had God even given the Jews the privilege to go and enslave the Canaanites, because of their sins, we may not without any such permit, go and enslave a whole people—much less an innocent and a wholly different people. For the Africans whom we are enslaving, are a different race of men, different in form, color, and language from those Asiatics doing a bond service to the Jews.

But do you say the principle of slavery was sanctioned? This we deny. And if it had been, then who shall determine the race, color or form to be enslaved? We have not got the people who did service for the Jews, and God has not said in his

word, that any color has the right over another color to enslave it.